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260941Z Feb 04

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 001469

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/26/2014

TAGS: PREL IZ JO

SUBJECT: MFA IN BAGHDAD TELLS IRAQ MISSION IN AMMAN TO HALT
ISSUANCE OF INTERIM TRAVEL DOCUMENT(ITD)

REF: A. AMMAN 1337 B. AMMAN 724

Classified By: A/DCM Doug Silliman for reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

¶11. (C) Maan Barakat, Charge d'Affaires at the Iraq Mission in Amman, told PolOff February 24 that he had been instructed by the Consular Department at the MFA in Baghdad to stop issuing ITDs. Barakat said he was advised that the ITD and the accompanying stamp imprint were too easy to forge. He confirmed that the Iraqi mission in Amman had issued 157 ITDs to date.

¶12. (C) Barakat claimed that the U.K. Embassy was refusing to issue student visas to Iraqi ITD holders, and limited visa issuance to those who were seeking medical treatment or holding official invitations to visit the U.K. As to ITDs and Jordan, Barakat said he understood that as of a week ago, the GOJ was allowing Iraqi ITD holders entering from Iraq to remain in Jordan for one week, versus the previous policy of allowing them a two week stay. Those entering Jordan with Iraqi passports (valid or expired) were being allowed to stay for two weeks with extensions of up to 3 months allowed.

¶13. (C) Comment: We cannot confirm the details of Barakat's description of British or Jordanian ITD acceptance policy. In fact, the GOJ appears to be taking a liberal -- but case by case -- approach to accepting ITDs. An official at the British Embassy in Amman cited student visas as the only exception to an otherwise liberal acceptance of the ITD for UK visa issuance. An official with CPA Baghdad confirmed that the Iraqi MFA ordered all Iraqi missions to halt issuance of ITDs. The official said that "in order for an ITD to be valid - it needs to have both a wet stamp and dry seal." Apparently, Iraqi missions abroad were not provided with dry seals. MFA HQ hoped to send dry seals out by Saturday, February 28, allowing Iraqi missions to commence ITD issuance the following week. End Comment.

¶14. (U) CPA Baghdad minimize considered.

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GNEHM